
Program Memorandum Intermediaries/Carriers

Department of Health &
Human Services (DHHS)
Centers for Medicare &
Medicaid Services (CMS)

Transmittal AB-03-030

DATE: FEBRUARY 28, 2003

CHANGE REQUEST 2578

SUBJECT: Changes to the Laboratory National Coverage Determination (NCD) Edit Software for April 1, 2003

The purpose of this Program Memorandum (PM) is to announce the changes that will be included in the April release of the edit module. Program Memorandum (PM) AB-02-110 implemented the NCDs for clinical diagnostic laboratory services that were developed by the laboratory negotiated rulemaking committee and published as a final rule on November 23, 2001. We announced in this PM that nationally uniform software would be developed by Computer Sciences Corporation and incorporated into the shared systems so that laboratory claims subject to one of the 23 NCDs would be processed uniformly throughout the nation effective January 1, 2003. The laboratory edit module for the NCDs will be updated quarterly as necessary to reflect ministerial coding updates and substantive changes to the NCDs developed through the NCD process.

1. On January 28, 2003 we posted on the Internet a decision memorandum announcing our intent to add the following ICD-9-CM codes to the serum iron studies NCD: 282.60, 282.61, 282.62, 282.63, 282.69, and 285.21. These are codes for anemia in patients with end-stage renal disease and sickle cell anemia. We believe these codes flow from the existing narrative in the serum iron studies relating to abnormal blood count values. (See <http://cms.hhs.gov/ncdr/memo.asp?id=74> for additional information regarding this change.)

Pursuant to §1869(f)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act, the term “national coverage determination” means a determination by the Secretary with respect to whether or not a particular item or service is covered nationally under this title [XVIII], but does not include a determination of what code, if any, is assigned to a particular item or service covered under this title or a determination with respect to the amount of payment made for a particular item or service so covered.” Thus, the assignment of the ICD-9-CM codes to given services will not be subject to review under section 1869(f).

2. The Updates to the Current Procedure Terminology (CPT) codes for 2003 included the deletion of seven codes that are currently in the blood count NCD. We are eliminating the following CPT codes from the edit software: 85021, 85022, 85023, 85024, 85031, 85590, and 85595. The CPT also added new blood count codes for 2003. Therefore, we have undertaken an NCD review to add new codes to this policy. Readers may follow the progress of this NCD review on the Internet at: <http://cms.hhs.gov/ncdr/trackingsheet.asp?id=88>.

3. In PM AB-02-134, question and answer 4 noted that CPT codes 87184 and 87186, the susceptibility studies for antimicrobial agents, were not specific to urine. Editing these codes for the diagnoses in the urine culture NCD could result in inappropriate denials when the code was being used for other identifications. We stated that the edit module would not edit for these CPT codes, but that contractors could develop local edits for them.

We have learned that an error was made in developing the edit module and these codes were not removed as planned. The oversight will be corrected in the April update of the edit module. In the meantime, contractors may use the override indicator on all claims with CPT codes 87184 and 87186 to by pass the edit module. Any inappropriate denials should be adjusted when brought to the contractor’s attention.

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4. In the serum iron studies NCD, there is a mismatch between the ICD-9-CM codes and the description of the codes in the list of ICD-9-CM codes covered by Medicare. The coding manual is being corrected to display the correct description of ICD-9-CM codes 562.02 and 562.03 to reflect that these codes indicate diverticulosis and diverticulitis of the small intestine with hemorrhage. No changes in the software are necessary for this change.

5. Several changes were made to the NCDs as produced in PM AB-02-110. These changes were incorporated in the January 1, 2003 release and in the Laboratory NCD Manual that is on the Internet at: <http://cms.hhs.gov/ncd/manual.pdf>. These changes do not reflect substantive changes to the policies, but rather reflect correction of typographical errors and/or ministerial coding updates that have taken place prior to the January 2003 release. The changes to the NCDs are tracked in the NCD Manual Updates section of the NCD Manual. Below is a listing of the changes that were made in the January release. We believe that we have captured most of the typographical errors and ministerial coding update changes and that future changes of this nature will be limited.

- Expanded truncated code 780.9 to 780.99 in the urine culture and thyroid NCD
- Corrected code 99.8 to 099.8 in the HIV diagnostic NCD
- Corrected code 99.9 to 099.9 in the HIV diagnostic NCD
- Expanded the range of codes for coronary atherosclerosis to include new code 414.06 in the prothrombin time, blood glucose and lipid NCDs
- Added new code 414.12 to the range of codes for aneurysm and dissection of coronary artery in the blood glucose and lipid NCDs
- Expanded truncated code 459.1 to 459.10-459.13 and 459.19 in the prothrombin time NCD
- Expanded truncated code 633.9 to 633.90 and 633.91 in the human chorionic gonadotropin NCD
- Expanded truncated code 521.0 to 521.00 in the blood counts NCD
- Expanded truncated code V59.0 to V59.01, V59.02, and V59.09 in the blood count NCD
- Corrected last code in range 813.30-813.38 to 813.33 in the prothrombin time NCD
- Expanded truncated code 863.9 to 863.90 in the prothrombin time NCD
- Expanded truncated code 790.0 to 790.01 and 790.09 in the serum iron studies NCD
- Expanded truncated code 256.3 to 256.31 and 256.39 in the collagen crosslinks and thyroid NCDs
- Expanded truncated code 564.0 to 564.00-564.02, and 564.09 in the thyroid and fecal occult blood NCDs
- Expanded truncated code 200.0 to 200.00 in the serum iron studies NCD
- Deleted sentence 2 of Limitation #1 in the urine culture NCD as the reference was to a code that had been deleted from the CPT.
- Added new code 277.03 to the alpha-fetoprotein NCD
- Added new code 537.84 to the partial thromboplastin time, serum iron studies, and fecal occult blood NCDs
- Added new code 569.86 to the serum iron studies and fecal occult blood NCDs
- Added new codes 771.81 - 771.83 to the urine culture NCD
- Added codes 634.00-634.02, 642.30-642.34, 642.40-642.74, 642.90-642.94 to the human chorionic gonadotropin NCD that were included in the final rule but inadvertently omitted from the PM AB-02-110
- Added code 216.0-216.9 to the blood counts NCD that were included in but were inadvertently omitted from PM AB-02-110
- Corrected typo in code 401.1 to make it 401.0 in the lipid NCD as originally stated in the final rule
- Corrected typo in code 780.2 to make it 780.02 in the urine culture NCD
- Expanded truncated code 780.9 to 780.99 in the thyroid NCD

- Expanded truncated code 733.1 to 733.10 in the prothombin time NCD
- Modified the codes description for the following codes: 85007, 85008, 85014, 85025, 85027, 85048, 780.99, 414.10, 214.0, 402.01, 402.11, 402.91, 428.0, 627.2, 627.4 in the NCD Manual.

These changes enumerated in the bullets above are already incorporated in the lab edit module software and the coding manual on the Internet. Contractors should not have to take any actions to implement these items at this time.

Provider Education

This information must be shared with providers through your Web site within two weeks of receiving this PM and in your next regularly scheduled bulletin.

The *effective date* for this PM is services furnished on or after April 1, 2003.

The *implementation date* for this PM is April 1, 2003.

These instructions should be implemented within your current operating budget.

This PM may be discarded after March 31, 2004.

If you have any questions, contact Jackie Sheridan-Moore at 410-786-4635.